

Bill Fromhold

State Representative

49th District

Olympia address & phone number:

338 John L. O'Brien Building

PO Box 40600

Olympia, WA 98504-0600

(360) 786-7924

E-mail: fromhold_bi@leg.wa.gov

Toll-free Hotline: 1-800-562-6000

TDD (for hearing-impaired): 1-800-635-9993



CAPITAL LETTER:

An update from
your Legislature

Leadership:

Assistant Democratic Whip

Committees:

Vice Chair

Trade & Economic Development

Member

Appropriations

Higher Education

Dear Fellow Citizen:

Hello. I hope this Capital Letter finds you and your family safe.

It's late October as I draft this note. Americans — people and their families all over the world, in fact — still grieve for the lives that were lost in the September terrorist assault on our country. We are now starting to come to grips with the economic and social ramifications of this mindless terrorism. This is happening at the federal and state level, as well as here in Vancouver and Clark County.

Men and women in our armed forces are putting their lives on the line in the cause of justice and freedom. Meantime, people here are no different than anyone else around our state and nation. **Urban families, suburban families, and farm families, too, are united in the support for our country — and in the hope of a just peace for our world.**

In a few months, the 2002 Legislative Session will begin a 60-day meeting. Today, I'm sharing this edition of *Capital Letter* to briefly preview three directions — three themes — I want the Legislature to embrace: economic opportunity, secure community, and dependable mobility.

As always, I ask that you stay in touch. Ann Tjersland, my assistant, and I look forward to your letters, e-mails, and phone calls. Because decisions I make in Olympia are based on opinions you hold in Vancouver, I want to keep our lines of communication open. Always.

Respectfully,

Bill Fromhold
State Representative
49th Legislative District

Economic opportunity:

Decisions we seek today are the foundations on which the future is built

Planning for tomorrow. Ensuring a safe and healthy tomorrow — a healthy business climate and economic opportunity for every citizen and family — is all about planning.

No less than a family, neighborhood or town, our state should invest in planning for tomorrow. All across our nation right now, families and businesses are facing difficult times. These are times that no one could have predicted just a year or so ago. (Clark County's unemployment rate in September was 6.9 percent — compared with 4.1 percent last year. The state's current unemployment rate is 5.6 percent, and 4.9 percent is the national figure.) Even the economy in high-tech regions is sluggish at best — and rock-bottom in all-too-many homes.

My work in the upcoming legislative session will focus on these objectives:

- **Competitiveness.** Whether it's a firm or a farm, workers and their companies in Clark County and in other regions of Washington are known for world-class products. Our mission is to expand this reputation.
- **Training.** Young people just starting out, as well as seasoned and displaced workers seeking new opportunities would like a realistic prospect of achieving their dreams. We must make sure that our citizens have a chance to obtain family-wage jobs.
- **Government-responsiveness.** State agencies should be a partner with — not an adversary of — businesses. And that partnership should go every bit as much for private citizens, too. Whether you're a businessperson or a homeowner, you shouldn't have to confront a morass of paperwork to get your job done.
- **Trade and transportation.** It's not an accident that I tied these two subjects together. Washington businesses — farms and forests, as well as the newer industries in suburban and urban regions — depend on a solid system of roads, highways and bridges to move their products to Pacific Rim and other trading partners.

Representative Bill Fromhold

CAPITAL LETTER: An update from your Legislature

Ports and airports are pivotal in our efforts to keep Washington goods and products present in other people’s markets.

- **Water.** Everyone understands how important water is for a farm. Well, it’s just as important for other businesses. Farmers all over our state for several years have been facing a water-shortage. And now, other citizens are beginning to see why the Legislature has a lot of work to do in building a more stable water supply.

Secure community:
We have a right to feel safe
in our homes and on our streets

People shouldn’t have to live in fear.

You shouldn’t have to be worried when you send your kids to school or when you go to work. You shouldn’t have to be wondering what violence or other new outrage is next. That’s no kind of life.

And this freedom from fear that we call an American right is about more than our physical safety, and our kids’ physical safety. It goes beyond our direct well-being. What about the safe and dependable water supply that I mentioned above?

We shouldn’t have to wonder about our water — or about our food, heat and power. Other things, too, such as reasonable medical-coverage, a decent sewer system, freedom from abuse and bullying for our kids at school — these are rights we enjoy in this bargain called being an American. These are rights we have a duty to safeguard.

The 2002 Legislative Session will address these very rights and responsibilities. Still further, we will certainly work at strengthening our ability to respond to public-health and other emergencies.

Dependable mobility:
Efficiency and reliability should be
the cornerstone of our state’s policy

Looking at our transportation challenge, it becomes pretty clear pretty quickly that we’d better answer this question: “What will it take to fix the speed bump that Interstate 5 and a lot of our other roads and highways have become?”

The fact is, a combination state and regional approach is needed to meet Washington’s transportation challenge. We need a plan that incorporates the statewide perspective of the Legislature with on-the-scene thinking of local communities and their citizens. The Legislature must develop a plan — a coordinated transportation solution — that unites the corners of our state. Washington’s regions themselves then must make the call on local spending decisions.

We must do a better job moving people and products if we expect to keep our quality of life for families and our competitive edge for businesses.

As we work toward meeting this duty, it’s equally important to remember regional differences between, for instance, what’s going on in our own Southwest Washington communities and what the people want and need in King County — or over in the Tri-Cities, or Spokane, or wherever.

A solid new transportation plan must support families and businesses — and that certainly better include support for economic development in Southwest Washington. The plan must better reflect the fact that economic gridlock is as big a threat to the survival of businesses as traffic gridlock is to the patience of motorists. And we’ve got to put a lot of emphasis on freight mobility — on the ability of businesses and farmers to get their goods and products to our Southwest Washington ports and other destinations.

Printed on recycled paper



PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Washington State
Department of Printing

CAPITAL LETTER:
An update from
your Legislature

Representative Bill Fromhold
338 John L. O'Brien Building
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600